PHILADELPHIA, PA—Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) spoke at the 2009 American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) Human Powered Vehicle Challenge (HPVC) hosted by Drexel University on April 19, 2009. Over 300 students from all around the country and Central America designed vehicles for this competition in an effort to create a practical and sustainable transportation solution. This year the competition was held in Philadelphia at Drexel University and in Fairmont Park. Congressman Sestak attended the competition during the design and safety portion of the event while the teams were riding their vehicles, presenting their designs, and putting their entries on display in the Drexel Quad. Congressman Sestak viewed the entries, met with the teams, and addressed the competitors and spectators.

“Discovery and implementing practical, sustainable transportation alternatives is a necessity,” said Congressman Sestak. “We need it for our environment, we need it to help those hit by the economic downturn, and we need it to help revitalize our urban and dense suburban communities. I am genuinely impressed by the innovation on display here today. This is precisely the kind of technical prowess and ingenuity we need to encourage as much as possible.”

Congressman Sestak has commended the strategic investments to improve and safeguard our environment and modernize our infrastructure and transportation systems contained in the stimulus bill. Some of those provisions include:

Energy Efficiency Programs
The following programs are run by the Office of Energy, Efficiency and Renewable Energy, which can be reached at 202-586-9220. As of February 19, the office was still working to put together information. When it becomes available they will update their website, www.eere.energy.gov .
$300 million for funding for Energy Star program offering tax credits to consumers purchasing new, efficient appliances.
$2 billion for advanced batteries manufacturing grants.
$6.3 billion for energy efficiency grants to states and local governments.
$400 million for transport electrification grants.
$300 million for funding for states and local governments to buy efficient alternative fuel buses and trucks.
$2.5 billion for research and development of renewable and efficient energy technology (biomass, geothermal, base program activities into additional renewable technologies).
$4 billion for loan guarantees for standard renewables
$2 billion for transmission loan guarantees
National Energy Technology Laboratory programs. For more information on the following, visit

http://www.netl.doe.gov/
and go to the "soliticitations / business" tab on the left and signup to get advanced notification.
$1 billion for fossil energy research and development
$800 million for research into low-emission coal plants
$1.52 billion for grants for industrial carbon capture and energy efficiency improvement projects
$50 million for grants for identifying sites to store carbon dioxide emissions
$20 million for grants for training and research on safe storage of carbon emission

Energy Efficiency Block Grants. The agreement appropriates $3.2 billion for the Energy Department's Energy Efficiency Block Grant Program. The program, which was authorized by the 2007 Energy Independence and Security Act, provides grants to state, local, and tribal governments to fund public facility renovation projects that would install more energy efficient building technologies and materials, and energy efficient technology demonstration projects.

$250 million is included for energy retrofitting and green investments in HUD-assisted housing projects.

Electrical Grid Projects $11 billion for electrical grid projects. Of that total, $4.5 billion is for implementing "smart grid" technologies, which would sense, collect, and monitor data from a grid, provide real-time, two-way communication to help monitor or manage the grid, and provide real-time analysis and event prediction based on data that would be used to improve the reliability, quality, and performance of the electricity grid.

Renewable Electric Power Loan Guarantees. $6 billion for the Renewable Energy and Electric Power Transmission Loan Guarantee Program, $2 billion less than the House bill and $3.5 billion less than the Senate version. This program provides loan guarantees to private entities to fund alternative energy research. The funds would be used for biofuel projects that use technologies that are deemed commercially viable and produce transportation fuels that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

In the ASME Human Powered Vehicle Challenge (HPVC), teams compete to design and build aerodynamic, highly engineered vehicles that can be used for everyday activities—from commuting to and from work, to going to the grocery store. Though some vehicles have achieved record speeds of over 60 mph, the competition assigns great value to the elegance and ingenuity of the design, including presentation, practicality, safety and functionality.

All areas of engineering problem-solving are addressed—it's not as simple as it appears to design and build these vehicles. Senior engineering students can use this competition for their capstone project and with their efforts design and construct a fast, sleek, and safe vehicle capable of road use. The competition also encourages women to study engineering by mandating that teams have at least two women who must work on the design and construction phases. The vehicles are judged on design, safety and performance. The first stage of the competition is the preparation of a comprehensive design report. The second part of the competition includes design presentation and performance events, held over a weekend where the vehicles race against one another in time trials, an endurance event and a utility course. For more information on the Challenge, visit: http://www.asme.org/Events/Contests/HPV/Human_Powered_Vehicle.cfm .

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. Congress.

###